

52914/10  
A FEW PLAIN DIRECTIONS

ON THE

EMPLOYMENT OF CAMPHOR

IN THE

ASIATIC CHOLERA,

ADAPTED TO GENERAL USE.

BY DR. BELLUOMINI.

LONDON:

1832.

# TREATMENT

## OF THE

# CHOLERA.

---

London, July, 1832.

The Cholera, which appeared in England in a much milder form, and committed by far less ravages than in any other country, so that in the beginning of May last, it seemed to have nearly vanished, now again lifts its dreadful front, spreading anew its contagion, and carrying off from day to day numerous victims.

In the midst of these unhappy circumstances, it is painful to remark, that up to the present time the methods employed in curing this frightful disorder, have met every where with but little success, so that the mortality is nearly as great now as at the first appearance of the malady.

One of the reasons to which must be in some measure attributed this want of success in its treatment, is doubtlessly the instantaneous violence with which the malady attacks the body ; so that the time which must necessarily intervene between the appearance of the first symptoms and the arrival of the doctor, or while the patient is being conveyed to an hospital, is often a space of time sufficiently long to cause the death of the sufferer, or to place him beyond the reach of medical aid. In the course of an hour the patient often becomes stiff, cold, and apparently dead, or otherwise completely exhausted by continual evacuations, upwards and downwards.

In order to be armed and prepared for such a dreadful attack, every one should be acquainted with the symptoms of the malady, so as immediately to be certified of its presence; and should be enabled to administer without any loss of time, a remedy strong enough to encounter and abate the violence of the disease, and of so simple a nature as to be within the reach of every person.

To ascertain the presence of the malady may perhaps be no difficult matter, it has been remarked, but where is to be found a remedy at once so useful, powerful, and easy to be administered, while it is allowed that so little progress has been made in a successful treatment of this disorder?

There is however indeed such a remedy, and it was pointed out a year ago in Germany, by Dr. Hahnemann; but as he is the author of a new medical doctrine termed *Homœopathic*, which by many of the faculty is rejected, and from narrow and illiberal views persecuted; they have also blindly rejected the remedy proposed by him, without giving themselves the trouble to examine whether it was or not supported by facts. They conspired also by every means in their power, to prevent the public from being informed of the success obtained by medical men following the Homœopathic doctrine; and owing to the slavish state of the press in Germany, this conspiracy triumphed for some time; but the excellency of the remedy is now completely established, and is already in almost general use throughout Germany and Russia.

I shall now therefore confidently describe what the remedy is, and give directions as to the manner of applying it, trusting that the physicians of England, enlightened, liberal, and humane as they



are, will readily contribute to the propagation of this specific, when acquainted with its utility.

This remedy, which can be easily administered by any one, is no other than *Camphor*. Mention had been already made of its use some months ago, in several of the London newspapers, but in so slight a manner, that no attention it seems, was paid to it by the public. Before however prescribing the manner in which it must be given, and in what quantity, I shall briefly indicate the symptoms by which the presence of the Cholera is to be known.

The Cholera should be placed in that class of disorders commonly termed spasmodic, the attacks of which are more especially directed to the nervous system. This malady usually announces itself by a coldness in the hands and feet, which afterwards extends to the arms, legs and whole body, and even to the tongue, which upon being touched, feels like a piece of raw, cold flesh; the eyes appear sunk and haggard, and are surrounded by marks of a livid hue; the expression of the features is altered in an extraordinary manner; the voice becomes hoarse and assumes a peculiar tone, and the patient appears to be nearly in the last agonies, without being able to express what he feels. The pit of the stomach is extremely sensible and tender, and very painful when touched; there is a parching thirst with desire for cold water, attended by a sensation of heat in the inside. Cramps come on, attended by great pain, first in the fingers and toes, and afterwards in the arms and legs, which become livid, or of a leaden colour. The thighs and other parts of the body, often assume a marbled or mottled appearance. A cold and clammy sweat rises upon the surface of the

body, the patient falls into a fainting fit, and appears to be dead. The pulse becomes weak and almost imperceptible, and sometimes ceases entirely.

If the patient does not die in this spasmodic paroxysm the malady soon assumes another character. Vomiting the most violent, or enormous evacuations by stool, now take place, which often continue with such force, that the patient is soon reduced to the last extremities. The matter thus evacuated differs at the beginning, but it soon becomes of a peculiar character, appearing whitish like whey or barley water, or rice water, containing flaky particles swimming about, and resembling starch or soap. The urine is entirely stopped, and the secretion of bile quite suspended; sometimes also the skin upon the hands and feet becomes shrivelled, as if they had been long in hot water.

These symptoms do not all appear in the order in which I have noted them down, nor do they appear in the same person when attacked, but differently and promiscuously. Sometimes it happens that there are very few spasmodic pains, and those so slight that the disorder does begin, or might seem to begin, with nausea and vomiting, or by purging only. In this case, it is rather difficult to conclude whether the evacuations are the effect of choleric contagion or of some other complaint; if, however, they are produced by Cholera they are soon increased and assume that liquid and whitish appearance which has been described; and this is followed by some of the symptoms already mentioned, particularly cramps, which leave no doubt as to the identity of the malady. But however the disorder may begin, whether by spasms



or evacuations, or by an apoplectic attack, without hesitating or losing a moment of time, the *Camphor* should be instantly administered to the patient. For this purpose, every body should have in the house some *Camphorated spirits of wine*, such as may be purchased at the apothecaries', prepared according to the prescriptions of the London Pharmacopœa. The dose to be given, is two drops at a time and not more. These two drops may be poured upon a piece of sugar, not bigger than a pea, which must then be put upon the tongue of the patient ; or the two drops may be put into ten or twelve drops of water in a tea-spoon and so swallowed by the patient.

This dose must be repeated every three, four, or five minutes. The more violent the attack, the oftener the dose must be administered. If the attack is not violent, half an hour is frequently sufficient to place the patient out of danger ; but it is sometimes necessary to continue the application of the remedy a long time. If after having given one dose of Camphor, the patient should vomit, another dose must be immediately administered, without waiting the intervals of three, four, or five minutes. When it is perceived that the patient begins to grow better, the doses must be repeated less frequently, so that instead of giving them every five minutes, they may be given at the end of every ten, fifteen, twenty, or thirty minutes, and so on proportionably. While taking the Camphor, the patient may be allowed to satisfy his burning thirst, for which purpose, pure and fresh, and even iced water, may be given him frequently, but in small quantity, and a small piece of ice may be put from

time to time into his mouth. But care must be taken that no drink be given immediately after the dose is swallowed ; some time must intervene, otherwise the drink would weaken the effect of the Camphor. During the time that these remedies are administered, it is indispensably requisite, that nothing else should be given, neither tea, coffee, wine, cordials, nor in short, any thing but Camphor and pure water. Neither should strong smells be permitted to exhale in or near the chamber of the sick person, such as vinegar, pastilles, chlorat of lime, &c. If it should be found necessary to continue this treatment for a long time, beef broth, with the fat well skimmed off and very slightly salted, or not at all salted, may be given to the patient between the doses. It must be however admitted, that when the malady begins by vomiting and purging, the Camphor doses may be continued only upon observing that the patient gets better upon them ; but if, after a short time, the evacuations do not appear to diminish, recourse must be had to other remedies.

When the attack is not of the most violent kind, and if the administering of Camphor be commenced at the very first appearance of the disorder, and followed up exactly according to the directions above, there is every reason to expect, that this treatment alone will preserve the patient, as it has been lately found to do in numerous cases in Germany, Russia, and Hungary.

If it should be found that Camphor alone is not sufficient to remove the disorder, other Homœopathic remedies may be administered ; but as it would be difficult to give directions here upon their employ-



ment, for persons not conversant with the practice of physic, and as these remedies are not to be found at the apothecaries, I shall say nothing further about them; advising only that in such a case, a professional man be called in to attend the patient. When by the use of camphor, the violence of the disease shall have been abated, the ordinary method of treatment, though not so suitable as the Homœopathic, may be employed to complete the cure, and particularly when the doctor is persuaded that it is neither the number of remedies nor the quantity of doses which can accelerate the patient's recovery. Those medical men who in such cases may wish to continue the treatment according to the Homœopathic method can take as their guide the Memoir published in Paris, by Dr. Quin, upon that subject. It is to be hoped that this Memoir, which is already translated into English, will be published without delay.

To know how to treat the Cholera, is certainly an important acquisition, but it is far better to know how to guard against it. Cleanliness in clothes, and linen, simple and wholesome food, and moderation in every thing, are certainly means which contribute to keep off the danger of contagion, but these precautions are not always sufficient. I shall therefore here detail those preservative means, suggested by the Homœopathic doctrine, the utility of which has been proved by experience. Camphor is an excellent preservative, but as its action is extremely fugitive and unfixed, it is requisite to be almost continually in its fumes, to derive any advantage, a state which would be very inconvenient to many persons. Those however who are so situated as to be obliged to attend upon persons



afflicted by the Cholera, would doubtlessly be preserved from an attack, if from time to time, while administering to the patient, they rubbed a few drops of Camphor on their hands, and then apply them to their nose. Dr. Hahnemann, has advised and prescribed the use of two preparations, one of *Copper* and one of *White Hellebore*, (*Veratrum album*), as they are employed in the Homeöopathic method of treatment. With a drop of spirits of wine, containing a decillionth of a grain of each of these substances, about 300 little globules of sugar of milk are moisted, each of which is about the size of a poppy seed. Two or three of these pills are to be taken in the morning fasting, alternatively at the distance of some days; that is to say, after having taken for instance the Hellebore, some days must intervene, and then the preparation of Copper is taken, and some days after the Hellebore again, and so on till the danger of the contagion is passed away. While taking these medicines the use of coffee should be discontinued. Those who can refrain from the use of wine, tea, and all sorts of aromatic substances, may take these medicines, every eight days; but those who continue the use of wine, tea, &c. should take them every four days. However, the restrictions imposed on diet, together with the difficulty of procuring these medicines which are not to be had at the apothecaries,\* may perhaps prevent the use of such preservatives from becoming general. This being the case, Dr. A. Schmit, physician to the Duchess of Lucca, proposed a year ago a preserva-

\* Any persons wishing to have these medicines, can be readily supplied by applying to the author of this tract, at No. 2, Beak Street, Regent Street.

tive of a far more simple character, and easily to be attained by every one, namely the wearing of a piece of Copper suspended by a ribband from the neck, so as to remain exactly opposite to the pit of the stomach. The shape of this Piece may be round, or oval, and between two and three inches broad; its thickness may be equal to that of a sixpence, and it should be very smooth and well polished.\*

Those persons who like to enquire into the cause of every phenomenon they see, will perhaps smile at the idea of this amulet, being unable to conceive how a piece of Copper can produce any effect upon the human body. It is not my intention here to enter into a discussion to prove the possibility of this phenomenon, but I shall merely remind such of the extraordinary power exhibited upon the union of Copper and zinc in the *Voltas Pile*, and still more in the medicines prepared according to the Homœopathic method, from which it appears that from an almost inconceivable part of a grain of matter such as a decillionth is, a power may proceed not only capable of curing a deranged state of the organs, but of inflicting considerable pain upon them. Without however enquiring into the cause of the utility of this Copper Piece, it is sufficient to observe that this preservative has succeeded very well in Hungary, at Vienna and in other parts of Germany; those who wore it having been preserved from attacks of the Cholera, or if attacked, which was owing to their irregular conduct, they escaped with but a slight infliction. Doctors practising according to the Homœopathic doctrine at Vienna, attribute prin-

\* These Copper Pieces are to be had of T. Johnson Ironmonger, 4 Conduit street

cipally the little havoc committed by the cholera in that capital, to the use of this preservative, of which it is calculated more than 200,000 were sold during the prevalence of the epidemic. Nearly the whole of the soldiery wore this small plate of Copper, and it is a well-known fact that there were very few cases of Cholera in the whole garrison. It is here necessary to remark one thing, and that is, that the Copper Piece should be kept very clean and often rubbed, for in proportion as it becomes tarnished (*oxidated*) its action becomes stronger, so as sometimes to affect the stomach and the bowels, and to produce sickness, looseness, &c. Persons of a delicate constitution may enclose this Piece in a thin linen case.

To conclude, I am fully confident that if the instructions which have been here given are carefully followed, many lives will be preserved. Still however should any one not believe in the power and efficacy of the small quantity of Camphor prescribed, I entreat him to make an essay, and I am certain that after the trial, he himself will become a zealous supporter of this remedy.

THE END.

---

LONDON:

PRINTED BY G. SCHULZE, 13, POLAND STREET.



TO BE HAD AT  
BAILLIERE'S 219 REGENT STREET.

*Price Three-pence.*

